

## HB 685 -- SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

SPONSOR: Sommer

This bill requires school boards in provisionally accredited and unaccredited school districts with a building performing at unaccredited levels to enter into a contract with the State Board of Education within the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to commit to specified interventions. At the discretion of the state board, a district that is accredited without provision that has one or more buildings that are performing at unaccredited or provisionally accredited levels may enter into a contract to commit to certain interventions. When a contract is executed, the state board must not accredit the district at a level below provisionally accredited for the term of the contract. If the state board deems it necessary, the contract must require the engagement of community partners.

A review team must be assigned by the department to perform a thorough review of any school district when a school district is declared to be provisionally accredited or unaccredited, when a building in an accredited district is performing at an unaccredited or provisionally accredited level, and when the department deems a district in need of additional support. The review team must issue a report to the state board and the district that identifies priority areas for improvement and assist in procuring additional supports and resources. If the district achieves growth in its priority areas and continues to score at the provisionally accredited level on its annual performance report, it must remain designated at a provisionally accredited level. For an unaccredited school, the department and a leadership team composed of regional educational leaders and representatives from the school community chosen by the department must study instructional models, share options with the community, and facilitate the selection of a new design model that is a research- or evidence-based model. The department and district must agree to a set of common instructional goals and student achievement outcomes for regaining accreditation without provision for individual schools.

The bill requires local school board members who are reelected after a break in service after August 28, 2015, to successfully complete orientation and training within one year of the date of the election or appointment. All incumbent board members must complete at least six hours of continuing education within the first year of each additional term of office. Board members of certain districts must annually complete at least 12 hours of training. Failure to complete the required training must result in forfeiture of the member's position on the school board.

The bill specifies that the board of education of a district that does not maintain a high school serving grades nine through 12 must pay tuition and provide transportation to a public high school for each pupil resident who has completed the work of the highest grade offered in the schools of the district who attends a public high school in another district of the same or an adjoining county.

The bill requires students who participated in the transfer program in school year 2014-15 to be permitted to continue to attend in the receiving district until graduation under conditions specified in the bill unless the sending district regains accreditation, in which case the student must return when he or she would have to change school buildings in the receiving district. Test scores of the transfer students must not be counted as part of the receiving district's scores for the first two years the student attends school in the receiving district. The sending district's obligation to provide transportation must cease when the sending district regains provisional accredited status.

The bill establishes a School Transfer Corporation, a public body corporate, for the purpose of implementing a voluntary school transfer program to serve students transferring to other districts due to a district's status as provisionally accredited or unaccredited. These provisions apply to student transfers initiated after August 28, 2015, and must not apply to any students qualified to transfer under the provisions of Section 167.131, RSMo.

Participation by a school district in the voluntary school transfer program is at the option of the school district; a district not opting into the program must be excluded from the program and must not be required to accept transfer students from any other district. The corporation must be governed by a board of directors consisting of one representative selected by the governing body of each district that participates in the voluntary school transfer program. The vote of each member of the board must be weighted proportionately to the percentage of the total of transfer students who attend school in the member's district. The corporation's board of directors must design and operate a voluntary school transfer program for all participating districts.

For each student participating in the voluntary transfer program, the corporation must receive the total of all state and federal aid that would otherwise be paid to the student's district of residence including, but not limited to, state aid provided through county foreign insurance tax, the Fair Share Fund, the Foundation Formula, and the school district trust fund. The corporation must pay a school district that receives a nonresident student from the funds of the corporation in accordance with these provisions and

agreements between the corporation and the participating school districts.

The corporation created must have all powers of a public body corporate, except that it must not have paid employees. The corporation, by contract with any public entity, school district, or private entity, may retain the services of a fiscal agent, make provisions for accounting, transportation management, or other assistance that the corporation may need to carry out its functions.

All funds received by the corporation must become funds of the corporation and paid for the purposes specified in these provisions and in accordance with agreements entered into between the corporation and participating school districts and other entities provided that funds received for particular purposes, under federal or state categorical programs benefiting individual students, must be paid to the district or entity providing services to the students entitled to the services. The proportionate share of federal and state resources generated by students with disabilities, or the staff serving them, must be paid to the district where the child is attending school unless the district of residence is required by law to provide the services to the individual students, except that a special school district containing the district where the child is attending school must be paid for all unreimbursed expenses for special education services provided to students with disabilities. Funds held by the corporation at the close of a fiscal year may be carried over and utilized by the corporation in subsequent fiscal years for these purposes.